

WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

COMMITTEE: **OCCUPANCY TAX COORDINATION**

DATE: MAY 2, 2006

Committee Members Present:

Caimano
Tessier
Gabriels
Kenny
Wm. Thomas
Haskell

Others Present:

Joan Parsons, Commissioner of Administrative
and Fiscal Services
Joan Sady, Clerk
Paul Dusek, County Attorney
Kate Johnson, Tourism Coordinator
Vonda Beattie, Sr. Account Clerk, Tourism Dept.
Fred Austin, Fort William Henry
Christine Margiotta, *The Post-Star*
Carlene A. Ramsey, Sr. Legislative Office
Specialist

Absent:

Merlino

Mr. Caimano called the meeting to order at 2:40 p.m.

Vonda Beattie, Senior Account Clerk for the Tourism Department, distributed an Agenda packet to each of the Committee members and a copy is on file with the minutes.

Motion was made by Mr. Haskell, seconded by Mr. Kenny and carried unanimously to approve the minutes of the last meeting, subject to correction by the Clerk.

Mr. Caimano announced the Agenda Item 1a) Occupancy Tax Revenue, would be tabled at this point since the County Treasurer was unable to attend today's meeting.

Turning to Agenda Item 1b) Apparel for volunteers working the Fire Chief's Convention, Kate Johnson, Tourism Coordinator, reported she had obtained quotes for 60 shirts. She commented the shirts would have the County lock-up (logo) on the front and the word "volunteer" across the back. Of the three quotes obtained, she stated, the low bidder was Promotional Concepts, Inc., at a cost of \$1,115.52 for the 60 shirts.

Mr. Kenny clarified the shirts in question would be purchased for the use of Warren County volunteers, who had NO connection with the Fire Chief's Association.

Ms. Johnson further confirmed the printing on the shirts had purposely been designed so the shirts could be worn at other County events, and not just for this one case.

Motion was made by Mr. Haskell, seconded by Mr. Gabriels and carried unanimously to authorize a contract with Promotional Concepts, Inc., at a cost not to exceed \$1,115.52 , for the purchase of 60 polo shirts, for the use of County volunteers at various County events. The Committee authorized a resolution be prepared for the May 12th Board meeting and a copy of the request is on file with the minutes.

Mr. Caimano returned to Agenda review at Item 1d) regarding the distribution formula of the 10% earmarked for event funding. He noted the Committee had adopted the Scoring Systems Guidelines by Resolution No. 261 of 2006. Ms. Sady, Clerk of the Board, distributed copies of Resolution No. 261 of 2006 to all in attendance and a copy is on file with the minutes.

Mr. Caimano noted Agenda Item 2 pertained to the distribution of the 2005 Occupancy Tax to municipalities. He noted the Agenda packet included a chart of the calculated amounts that each of the towns would receive.

Motion was made by Mr. Tessier, seconded by Mr. Gabriels and carried unanimously to authorize the distribution as presented, and to authorize a resolution be prepared for the May 12th Board meeting. A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes.

Mr. Kenny said it was his understanding the County Attorney had been asked to review the various towns' usage and report back to the Committee. Mr. Tessier, as Town of Lake George Supervisor, stated the County Attorney's Office had sent a questionnaire to each of the towns. Messrs. Tessier and Haskell confirmed the questionnaires had been completed and returned to the County Attorney, several weeks ago.

Mr. Caimano continued Agenda review at Item 3, Occupancy Tax Funding Requests, as he noted the Agenda packet included a chart on the 2006 Occupancy Tax Funding as of March 17, 2006.

Mr. Stec entered the meeting at 2:45 p.m.

Privilege of the floor was extended to William Dutcher, of Americade, Inc. (Americade). Mr. Dutcher said he felt that Americade was cash flow positive, by a huge margin, for Warren County's Occupancy Tax pot. He stated the following:

1. the 2005 event had contributed an estimated \$250,000 in Occupancy Tax Revenue and he acknowledged his organization received \$50,000 in Occ. Tax funding
2. Americade employs 12 local residents, year round;
3. the event fills all of Warren County, not just Lake George Village;
4. the event fills beds for 7-8 nights, in contrast to the more common Friday/Saturday nights;
5. the event fills beds during what used to be called the off-season. He said he felt Americade had helped to redefine the June season in Warren County.
6. the event's popularity allows the hotels/motels to double their nightly rate (which was a dis-incentive for return attendees);
7. Americade contributes an average of \$60,000, annually, to local charities;
8. Americade attendees have brought their professional organizations back to the area, after visiting during Americade;
9. Americade has national promotional impact, such as Speed Vision, which has led to international exposure, with attendees traveling from as far away as England.

10. Americade attempts to buy locally, with a policy to pay up to 5% more, to keep the purchase local.

11. Americade has stayed local for 24 years in a row, rather than moving every few years. He noted the GWRIA and the GWTA move every year or two, and the Fire Chiefs' Convention has moved every 3-7 years.

12. Americade displays the Warren County logo on all of its large ads (DVDs, VHS tapes, the website, event program, etc.).

Mr. Dutcher directed attention to the handout, Resolution No. 261 of 2006, page 3, and read "funding is to encourage new events." He said he hoped he was mis-reading it, since the guidelines appeared to state the most Americade could hope for (this year and beyond) was \$12,500, in spite of the fact the event would bring in at least \$250,000 in Occupancy Tax revenue.

Mr. Caimano pointed out that Mr. Dutcher's interpretation was mistaken. Mr. Kenny clarified Mr. Dutcher was partially mistaken. He explained 2006 would be the second year of funding for Americade, which qualified the event for "up to a maximum eligible funding" of \$50,000.

Mr. Dutcher commented that particular portion of the Guidelines would, in-effect, encourage events to move every few years. He noted, it was a challenge for Americade to remain in the same location, year after year, since the most common complaint from attendees (who choose not to return) was they "have been there, done that" and they were looking for new roads to drive. The registration for 2006, he noted, was down considerably from previous years. He pondered whether or not Americade had run out of the group of people who want to ride motorcycles here, and pay double for their motel rooms. He said he was truly concerned. He declared he had completed his presentation, although it had *not* been a "rah, rah," type of presentation.

Mr. Caimano commented the Guidelines were not meant to imply the funding was ONLY to encourage new events. He acknowledged the first rule in economic development was keeping what you have, first and foremost.

Mr. Kenny concurred with Mr. Caimano, although he declared the Occupancy Tax Coordination Committee was here to encourage new events. He clarified the Guidelines were intended to encourage new events to become self-sustaining, such as Americade, who survived its first 22 years without any funds from the County. He also said he felt Americade was one of the top events for Warren County, although he did not want to fund the event for an extended period of time.

Mr. Dutcher acknowledged that he could understand Mr. Kenny's point of view. However, Mr. Dutcher noted, from his side of the table, he sees the huge overhead it takes to keep the event in Lake George, which includes the 11 1/4 % tax applied to the "doubled motel prices." He further noted that 4% of the tax goes back into the Occupancy Tax pot, which amounts to approximately \$250,000 (from Americade

attendees) and he said it was a "particularly bitter pill" to see that aspect of the formula. He encouraged the Committee members to note "what it looks like from this side of the table."

Mr. Caimano extended his appreciation to Mr. Dutcher for his presentation.

Mr. Kenny expressed his concern with the \$163,000 in applications before the Committee today, with only \$109,649.77 left to distribute. He said he would prefer to listen to all of the applicants before making a decision on Americade, since the amounts may need to be proportionately reduced.

Mr. Gabriels said it was his understanding the Committee had tried to establish a policy that applications for 2006 events would need to be submitted earlier in the year. Mr. Caimano pointed out the Committee had not enforced the original January deadline and therefore could not hold other applicants to different standards.

Mr. Kenny concurred with both Mr. Gabriels and Mr. Caimano, and he pointed out the **application deadline for 2007 events was December 1, 2006**. He clarified that applications may still be accepted after December 1, 2006, if there were funds left to distribute. However, he said the applications received on or before December 1st would receive first preference.

Mr. Caimano pointed out the Committee was here to invest the Occupancy Tax Revenue into the events deemed to be in the best interest of Warren County.

Moving to the next applicant, privilege of the floor was extended to Charles Adams, of the National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA) Division III World Series. Mr. Adams extended his appreciation to the Committee for the opportunity to speak. He noted 2006 would be the second year the NJCAA World Series was to be held in the Glens Falls/Warren County area. In spite of the rainy weather throughout the 2005 event, he stated the NJCAA was extremely pleased with the conduct of the 2005 tournament.

Mr. Wm. Thomas entered the meeting at 2:55 p.m.

Mr. Adams acknowledged that new events sometimes required a little bit of time to develop a following. He stated the event had originated as a benefit to raise funds for the improvement of the East Field facilities. He explained the contracts were worded such that "any surplus funds were to be invested into East Field, yet any deficits were to be covered by Charles Adams, and thereby becomes his contribution to East Field." Consequently, he stated, this was an East Field Benefit Program, and he said he felt he could use all the help he could get.

Mr. Adams pointed out the event was one of only seven national tournaments held throughout the United States.

Responding to Mr. Kenny's questions, Mr. Adams reported the event included 8 teams, with 30 members each, plus the parents and guests of the players. The rough estimate on original new dollars, he said, had been set at \$500,000, brought to the area from places like Arkansas, Texas, Michigan, etc.

Mr. Caimano extended his appreciation to Mr. Adams for his presentation.

Next, Mr. Caimano acknowledged Sean Garvey, of the Garvey Auto Group. Mr. Garvey greeted the Committee, and he reported he had been following the various newspaper articles on the Occupancy Tax, over the past couple of years. He said he liked one particular quote from Mr. Caimano, that "there was a relative openness to the way the bed tax could be spent."

Mr. Garvey noted the original By-laws of the bed tax stated the tax was to "enhance the general economy of Warren County through promoting tourism," so he tried to think of what businesses would benefit from tourists in the area. He said hotels, restaurants, tour boats, and mini-golf courses, all came to mind, as seasonal businesses. Other business that were here all year long, he stated, were businesses he felt could benefit from some assistance, as well. Consequently, he said he tried to develop a special event for Warren County, entitled the "Garvey 300 - Race to Savings," which was a NASCAR themed event to sell automobiles.

Mr. Garvey explained the Tourism Department had provided him with a list of the events that had received funding from the Occupancy Tax monies. He said he felt that a number of the events did not necessarily put "heads in beds" to bring in that 4% bed tax revenue. He further observed some of the events brought people to the area who needed to eat in restaurants and make purchases that brought in sales tax revenue, and, in-turn, also contributed to the general economy of Warren County.

Mr. Garvey stated that even though he expected his event would result in "only a hand full" of heads in beds, he did expect the \$100,000 investment would return more than \$450,000 within 6 weeks time. He referred to the event application and the addendum entitled "Benefits to Warren County," which he reviewed in detail. Turning to the next page, or second addendum, he quickly reviewed the budget for the event. (See the addendums on file with the application for further details.)

Mr. Garvey acknowledged that the Committee may not have anticipated an application from a car salesman although he thought the event was worthy of consideration.

Mr. Caimano pointed out his first concern with the application was the Committee's funding limit was set at \$50,000. His second concern, he noted, was the event seemed to be geared more for an Economic Development Board, rather than the Occupancy Tax Coordination Committee. He stated the primary function of the "bed tax" was to promote an increase in the tourism industry.

Mr. Kenny concurred with Mr. Caimano, that the "bed tax funds" were intended to bring visitors to Warren County, who would not normally be here. He noted the question of assisting retail businesses with their advertisement expenses had never been discussed.

Mr. Garvey commented that he read the by-laws and determined the "bed tax" had primarily been set up to "promote the general economy of Warren County, primarily through tourism and special events." He noted the Garvey 300 - Race to Savings was a special event. He said he felt, that many of the good causes, the Committee has given money to, had tremendously enhanced the quality of life for the residents of Warren County, as well as residents in other surrounding counties. He said he felt his event would also enhance the general economy of Warren County.

Mr. Caimano responded that he felt, the members of the Occupancy Tax Coordination Committee were here as elected officials who were authorized to collect taxes for the the general welfare and good of the residents of the County. He said he felt the Committee was not here to function as "seed money for every business in town." He clarified the Committee was here to assist the businesses that brought tourists into the area.

Mr. Dusek said he could understand where Mr. Garvey may have interpreted portions of the By-laws in the way that he had. However, he said, he encouraged Mr. Garvey need to read the entire paragraph in the State Law (that provided Warren County the authority to the hotel/motel tax). By doing so, he said he was confident he would then understand the uses were limited to events that would bring large numbers of people to the County for tourism purposes. He stated that even though the Garvey 300 may in-fact yield a positive economic impact, he said the event would amount to the County partnering with a private business. Even though Americade, Inc. was a private business, he explained, the event's main function was to attract tourists into the area.

Mr. Garvey read "revenues derived (from the bed tax) were to be allocated to tourism promotion and convention development by using revenues to enhance the (general) economy of the County and to the promotion of tourist activities, conventions, trade shows, special events, and other directly related and supporting activities." Mr. Garvey stated that the Garvey 300 - Race to Savings was a "special event."

Mr. Dusek commented the "special event" would have to tie into tourism. He further stated, as the County Attorney, it was his opinion the Committee would be breaking the law if it funded Mr. Garvey's event.

Mr. Garvey responded by saying "so *all* private enterprise – you cannot fund."

Mr. Dusek clarified "not *all* private enterprises" and he indicated the County often engaged in contracts with private business, if "it went towards the creation of a tourism

type function." As an example, he stated that Paul Kaza was a private business the County contracted with for his work in placing advertisements with other private businesses. However, he pointed out all of the advertising was directly tied back into the tourism industry.

Mr. Dusek explained Mr. Garvey's special event was, in-fact, an event that would fund a private business, and not for the common good of the County, as a whole. He clarified a tourism event would be something to attract the visitors to the general area, who would then "go any which way they wanted, to spend their money, at a restaurant, hotel, or the Garvey auto dealership."

Mr. Dusek also pointed out the revenues in question were called a "hotel/motel tax" because it was a tax on people who stayed at hotels or motels. He noted its very character was to generate even more tax dollars by promoting more "heads in beds" even though they may also visit stores, restaurants, etc. Mr. Dusek said his review of Mr. Garvey's event had led him to conclude the Garvey 300 was just too far removed from the original intended use of the "hotel/motel tax."

Mr. Garvey explained the Garvey 300 event would bring the actual, real, "Jeff Gordon" car to the area, which would in-turn bring a huge number of people to the area, just to view the car. He declared that NASCAR was the single most popular, most widely viewed sporting event in the United States.

Mr. Caimano commented that if the Garvey 300 was a race that would bring people to the area, he felt the Committee would be able to help fund the event. He said he felt Mr. Garvey's listed "Benefits to Warren County" contained nothing that was wrong for Warren County, although the main function did not mesh with the purpose of the "hotel/motel tax."

Mr. Tessier pointed out "this money was being collected solely by the hotel/motel businesses, which was the reason behind 'heads in beds' to return the money to those who collected it." He also stated a lot of the hotel/motel owners were not happy about collecting the tax, even though they were required to do so.

Mr. Caimano extended his appreciation to Mr. Garvey for his presentation. However, he said he was seriously concerned the event may not qualify for funding.

Mr. Caimano reported he had a recent phone conversation with David Turner of the Adirondack Theatre Festival, with regards to the Scoring Guidelines as applied to the arts. As an example, he said, during the summer of 2005, the Hyde Museum ran an exhibit with Lake George as the main art subject. He said it was very difficult to measure the impact the exhibit had on the area, yet anyone in the Glens Falls area could intuitively discern the exhibit did have an impact.

Consequently, Mr. Caimano reported, the Adirondack Theatre Festival felt there was

more to be said about its funding application. Privilege of the floor was turned over to David King, President of the Adirondack Theatre Festival, who extended his appreciation to Mr. Caimano for his kind comments. Mr. King distributed a handout to each of the Committee members and a copy is on file with the minutes. He noted Mr. Turner was in New York City making the arrangements for the 12th season of the Adirondack Theatre Festival.

Mr. King pointed out the Committee had reviewed the Festival's original application for \$20,000 (submitted before the January deadline) and he graciously acknowledged the award of \$10,000 in funding. He said he understood the Committee decided on the \$10,000 after it determined the eligible expenses were those related to advertising and promotion. He pointed out the original, submitted marketing budget totaled \$48,950, and he felt compelled, as the President of the Festival, to verify the application had been reviewed correctly.

Mr. King said he felt the theatre festival was a complementary product to the hotel/motel industry. He also pointed out Mr. Kaza's initial review of the Warren County area indicated the attractions, in existence within the County, very nicely addressed the needs of the middle class, blue-collar, American workers. However, he further commented, Mr. Kaza's review identified one area that could use more attention were attractions for the white-collar, American worker, or the more sophisticated traveler looking for vacation destinations. He stated the theater was traditionally seen as one of the attractions for that demographic group. Since the Adirondack Theatre Festival was the only professional equity theater company in the County, he said he felt, the festival was crucial to that particular market.

In addition, Mr. King mentioned the Festival's zip code analysis demonstrated some of the Festival's guests were drawn to the area from so far away, it was safe to assume that at least 650 of them would have needed to stay the night. He explained it was very difficult to determine if those guests had stayed for one night, or for a week, or longer.

In summary, Mr. King extended his appreciation for the \$10,000 already approved (in January). He asked the Committee to reconsider the application for \$20,000, to be certain it had been properly reviewed. Without some additional funding, he stated, the Festival would be forced to scale back its planned marketing campaigns.

Mr. Kenny concurred with Mr. Caimano's earlier statement that separate guidelines would need to be developed to measure the impact of an arts event, related to an application for funding. He commented that the "arts" were certainly in a whole different category of the tourism industry.

Mr. Kenny paused for a moment while he reviewed the original application in comparison to the Scoring Guidelines. Mr. Kenny concluded the application scored 21 points. Mr. Caimano thanked Mr. King for his presentation.

Returning to Agenda review, privilege of the floor was extended to Doug Miller and Andrea Eaves, of the Adirondack Sports Complex, LLC. Mr. Miller explained his application had not been submitted earlier, since he had only recently learned of the opportunity to host the National Youth Lacrosse Organization's Championships in the Town of Queensbury and City of Glens Falls, during late July. He noted the event would involve 75 teams, averaging 12-14 players, with at least 2 coaches and 1 parent per team member, staying in the area for 3 nights, or roughly 6,000 people in beds. In addition, he pointed out the event was a national recruiting event for college recruiters throughout the country. Over the last 5 years, the event has been held in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, with teams competing from North Carolina, Maine, Illinois, etc.

Mr. Miller explained the application did not include a specific dollar amount. However, once he reviewed the Scoring Guidelines, he conservatively estimated the application scored 28-31 points. He also noted the number of guest/nights did not include referees and recruiters.

Responding to Mr. Caimano's questions, Mr. Miller clarified the event's total budget was \$30,037, yet the funding request would be for \$13,000. He noted the New York State High School Athletic Association places lacrosse as the single, fastest growing sport in the State, on the east coast, and across the country.

Mr. Caimano extended his appreciation to Mr. Miller for his presentation.

Privilege of the floor was next turned over to Graham Bailey, of the Swim Lake George Marathon. He provided a brief history of a swimming marathon held in 1927 from the Town of Hague to Fort William Henry in the Village of Lake George. He reported that representatives from the Chamber of Commerce, Lake George Association, and The Fund for Lake George had all expressed their support for a re-creation of the marathon event. He also noted a founding member of the International Swimming Hall of Fame and USA Swimming Association have all expressed an interest in using Lake George as the venue for a marathon swimming event.

Mr. Bailey said he wanted to apprise the Committee of a few changes to the application. He said he had reason to believe the proposed event would be sanctioned by the USA Swimming Association, which would then attract world class swimmers, along with a lot of publicity.

However, Mr. Bailey explained the event would also have events for the amateur marathon swimmer, as well as several different mini-marathons from ½ mile up to 5 miles, along with the full length of Lake George. By doing so, he stated, the event would draw participants from all over the Northeast.

The duration of the event, Mr. Bailey reported, would run from Thursday through Monday, during late August 2008. He pointed out the need to publicize the event

during 2007 had prompted the application, so far in advance.

Mr. Caimano suggested that Mr. Bailey would need to submit a formal application by December 1, 2006, which would require a budget to outline the funding required during 2007.

Following a brief discussion, it was determined the application already submitted for the Swim Lake George Marathon was an application for the 2006 revenue which would be distributed during 2007. Mr. Caimano pointed out the committee was currently reviewing applications to distribute the balance of 2005 revenue, which should have been completed back in January.

Mr. Caimano summarized the Committee had completed its review of 5 applications.

With regards to the application from Americade, Inc., for \$50,000, motion was made by Mr. Kenny, seconded by Mr. Tessier and carried unanimously to approve the request for \$50,000 and authorized a resolution be prepared for the May 12th Board meeting. A copy of the application is on file with the minutes.

Mr. Haskell concurred with Mr. Dutcher's earlier comments regarding the hotel operators choice to double their rates. He said he felt they were just "cutting their own throats" for return guests. He also commended Mr. Dutcher for including the Town of Thurman on the motorcycle route, which has brought a lot of visitors to the small community.

As for the application from the Junior College Athletic Association, Mr. Kenny reported the application scored 26 points which correlated to \$5,000 to \$7,000 under the Guidelines. He noted Mr. Adams' proposed event would result in profits going back into the East Field facility, rather than a private entity's pocket.

Motion was made by Mr. Haskell, seconded by Mr. Gabriels and carried unanimously to authorize a contract with NJCAA in the amount of \$10,000 and authorized a resolution be prepared for the May 12th Board meeting. A copy of the application is on file with the minutes.

Next, Mr. Caimano sought the Committee's input regarding the Garvey Auto Group's application for \$100,000. Mr. Kenny expressed his concern the purpose of the event may not be an appropriate use of the funds. Mr. Caimano said he understood the County Attorney had determined the proposed event was contrary to the Occupancy Tax Law (illegal). He said he personally felt the event sounded like a great event and he wished it could qualify for some assistance. However, he said, in view of the County Attorney's recommendation, the application would fail for lack of a motion.

Turning to Mr. Miller and Ms. Eaves's application for \$13,000, motion was made by Mr. Kenny, seconded by Mr. Haskell and carried unanimously to authorize a contract with

the Adirondack Sports Complex, LLC in the sum of \$13,000, for the National Lacrosse Youth Championship; and authorized a resolution be prepared for the May 12th Board meeting. A copy of the application is on file with the minutes.

Mr. Haskell observed the Lacrosse Championship met the criteria in a number of ways. Mr. Kenny concurred.

Mr. Caimano noted the final application from the Adirondack Theatre Festival, was a request to re-consider the original application to determine if it qualified for additional funding.

Mr. Haskell noted the original decision of \$10,000 had been made after careful consideration of the entire application. He said he would like to stand by the original amount.

Mr. Gabriels commented that cultural activities were very difficult to evaluate. Even though the County may not have a handle on how to measure them, he said he felt, cultural events brought a lot of visitors to Warren County. He noted, such visitors often wanted to come back to Warren County, over and over again.

Motion was made by Mr. Kenny, seconded by Mr. Gabriels and carried by majority vote, with Mr. Haskell opposing the motion, to authorize an additional \$5,000 in funding for the Adirondack Theatre Festival and authorized a resolution be prepared for the May 12th Board meeting. A copy of the application is on file with the minutes.

Mr. Kenny said he felt the Festival was a positive cultural event and he was comfortable with the increase in funding. He expressed his frustration with determining the amount of funding an event qualified for and he likened the experience to the television show, "Deal, or No Deal."

Returning to Agenda review at Item No. 4, 2006 Trolley Ad Space, Mr. Caimano noted Mr. Sopczyk was looking for a decision from the Committee. He said he personally felt the County should pass on the advertising opportunity.

Following a brief discussion, it was the consensus of the Committee to refer the request to the Tourism Committee.

Mr. Caimano noted Agenda Item 5 was regarding the use of the Warren County logo for all promotion and marketing of events sponsored with Occupancy Tax funds.

Mr. Haskell commented that he felt any organization that failed to abide by the funding agreement should be refused funding on subsequent applications.

Mr. Adams pointed out there may be some ambiguity in the various types of marketing materials, such as television or radio.

Ms. Johnson said her staff was concerned since the funding agreement called for the Tourism Department's approval regarding use of the County's logo. Ms. Beattie, of the Tourism Department, explained each of the organizers would have received the logo, yet nothing had come back for approval, prior to publication.

Mr. Dutcher suggested that when the advertisement was large enough to include the logo, he would certainly include it. However, he said some of his ads, such as a "line listing" simply had no space available.

Mr. Caimano declared that the Tourism Department should receive something to demonstrate how Warren County was reasonably promoted by the activity or event. He suggested the language in the agreement could be slightly adjusted.

Motion was made by Mr. Haskell, seconded by Mr. Gabriels and carried unanimously to require the recipients of Occupancy Tax funds to demonstrate how Warren County was reasonably promoted by the funded activity or event, in accordance with the funding agreement, or risk losing any subsequent funding.

Turning to Agenda Item 6, Smith Travel Research Reports, Mr. Caimano pointed out the reports were included in the Agenda packets.

Responding to Mr. Caimano's questions, Mr. Austin explained the Smith Travel Research did not include the Great Escape Lodge (with 200 rooms) in the reports. He also noted the Sagamore Hotel was not included in the statistics. He stated that if the stats on the Sagamore or Great Escape Lodge were included in the figures, the average cost per unit went up considerably, and skewed the figures.

Mr. Austin said the Smith Travel Reports would be helpful, if you compared the stats of a particular week (for an event) to the same week in the prior year. He said the numbers should show a spike in the numbers, when compared to the prior year. Such information, he mentioned, would be a good benchmark to measure for the Occupancy Tax.

Responding to questions from various supervisors, Mr. Austin explained the Smith Travel Research was the only control group available. He stated every franchise motel in Warren County was required to report their data to Smith Travel. As for the

information on the luxury accommodations, he said there were reports available on the competition at that next level. He noted the County would need to pay an additional fee for such report.

Mr. Caimano pointed out Agenda Item 7 contained two separate reports, Paul Kaza Expenses, and the Occupancy Tax Promotion Expense Summary Reports. He requested the Committee members review the reports and be prepared to discuss both at the next meeting.

Mr. Tessier suggested the Committee meetings be scheduled in the mornings, if at all possible. Mr. Gabriels apprised the first Tuesday of the month was not a good day for him to attend meetings.

There being no further business to come before the Committee, on motion by Mr. Haskell and seconded by Mr. Gabriels, Mr. Caimano adjourned the meeting at 3:51 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Carlene A. Ramsey, Sr. Legislative Office Specialist